

WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 5 February 1972

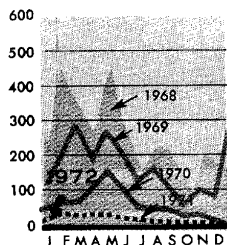
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NSA review completed

Top Secret

SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

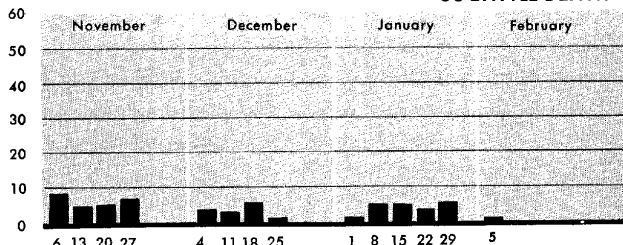
1968-1972
Weekly average for each month

NOVEMBER 1971 - FEBRUARY 1972

Weekly data as reported

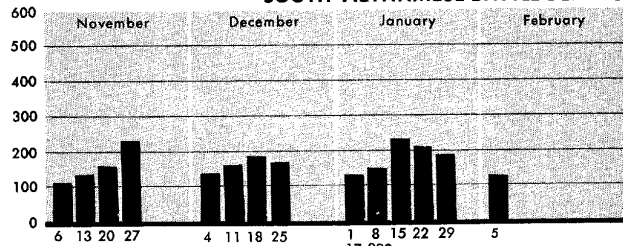
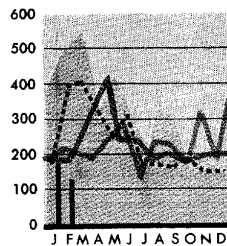
US BATTLE DEATHS

dropped to 2 from the 5 reported last week.



SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS

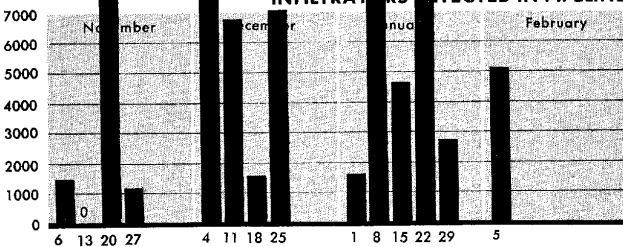
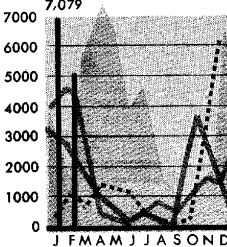
decreased from last week's 194 to 132. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.



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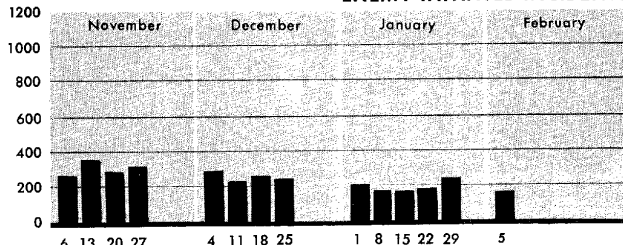
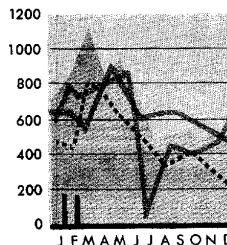
INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE

include four regular, [redacted] and four small, special purpose groups totaling 5,243. The infiltration estimate since 1 October 1971 is now some 75,700-77,700.



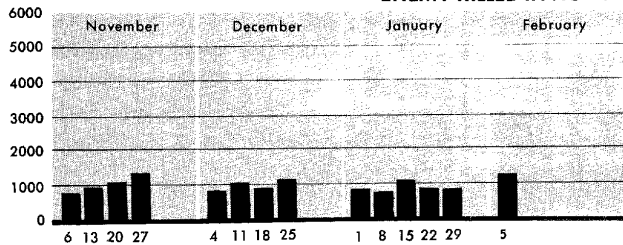
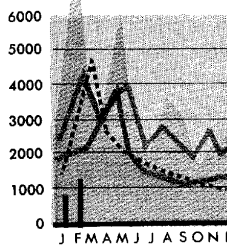
ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS

fell to 179 from the 230 of last week.



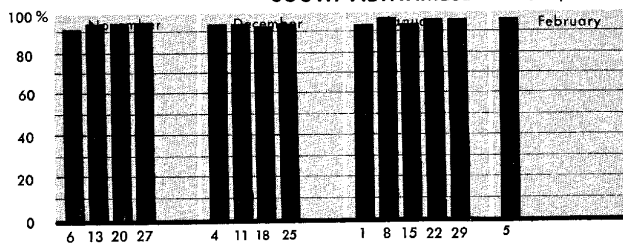
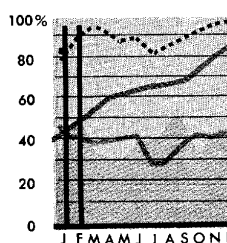
ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION

rose sharply to 1,305 from last week's 929.



SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS

as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by GVN forces, rose from last week's 95% to 97%.



Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

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Enemy Activity

The level of enemy activity remained low this week throughout South Vietnam, despite an increase in attacks by fire and small ground probes in northeast Quang Tri Province. The buildup of enemy forces and supplies along the western DMZ and in the western highlands is continuing. Most evidence still points to mid-February as the kick-off date for the expected enemy offensive, though some reports have been received giving earlier dates and others, later dates. It is possible, of course, that the Communists will not launch all of their attacks in a single time frame. Instead, there may be a series of jumps in the intensity of Communist military activity, spread over a period of days or even weeks.

In Cambodia, enemy-initiated activity was also at a low level. The eight battalion FANK operation north of Siem Reap near Angkor Wat has so far been inconclusive and has resulted in only small engagements with minor losses on either side. For the time being, the Communists will probably concentrate on preparing for military operations in South Vietnam's MR 3, and will maintain only enough pressure against FANK to keep the latter from being a nuisance.

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Military activity has also been light at Long Tieng in northern Laos. [] the NVA is planning to block the government counteroffensive which kicked off from Pha Dong, east of Long Tieng, on 5 February. Over 5,000 friendly troops have been marshalled at Pha Dong for the offensive operation, which is designed to lessen enemy pressure on Long Tieng valley by striking at enemy lines of communication on the Plaine des Jarres. So far, government forces have made only moderate advances from Pha Dong. In southern Laos, the central Panhandle has been quiet, but friendly units have been forced to withdraw farther westward from the Bolovens Plateau along Route 23.

Enemy Infiltration and Logistics

The addition of some 5,200 personnel raises the number of infiltrators destined for South Vietnam and Cambodia since 1 October 1971 to an estimated 75,700-77,700. Recent evidence indicates that military inductions were conducted at very high levels by Hanoi during both December and January. While most of these conscripts will not be ready for the current infiltration season, a shortened training cycle could make some of them available this spring. On the logistics front, the surge of shipments from North Vietnam into the system reported earlier is now being reflected in deliveries into South Vietnam and Cambodia, including the movement of heavier 122mm artillery to the B-3 Front and COSVN areas. Supply operations now appear to be focused on the southern segment of the trail system with stockpiling recently noted immediately above the DMZ, in MR 1, and in the western highlands of MR 2. The air defenses of the enemy's infiltration and supply pipeline continue to be improved in southern North Vietnam and the Lao Panhandle. The presence of a record number of SAM units north of the DMZ has enabled Hanoi to shift some SAM's and anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) into Laos while maintaining the previous defensive capability in North Vietnam. The present disposition of SAM, AAA, and air surveillance units in Laos represents the largest build-up of such equipment ever noted in the area. Moreover, the Communists have demonstrated their willingness to use these assets; to date this year, SAM's in Laos have been fired at U.S. aircraft three times.

Peace Negotiations

Hanoi and the Viet Cong engaged in a wide range of activity during the week in an effort to regain the propaganda initiative at the peace talks. First, they published their own nine-point peace plan and sought to place the blame on the U.S. for breaking off the secret negotiations. Then, on 2 February, the Viet Cong issued a call for the immediate resignation of South Vietnamese President Thieu in a two-point "elaboration" of the seven-point peace plan which they had made public in July 1971. Finally, at the end of the week, North Vietnamese negotiator Xuan Thuy made it crystal clear in

interviews with American newsmen that the questions of U.S. withdrawal and prisoners-of-war could not be resolved separately from the political issue of the future of South Vietnam. At the same time, Xuan Thuy sought to float the idea that a separate resolution of these issues would have been possible before the October 1971 presidential election in South Vietnam.

The net effect of all this sparring by the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong in Paris was a far more explicit rejection of the American-South Vietnamese eight-point plan than the Communists had made earlier -- though they carefully left the door cracked open for future negotiations. In addition, it seems fairly clear that the Communists, by fostering the canard that a separate deal exchanging U.S. withdrawal for the POW's was possible until last October, are once again playing for stakes on the U.S. domestic political scene to a greater extent than they are seriously negotiating in Paris.

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